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Virginia town prepares to battle a proposed anti-terrorist school

STAFFORD, Va. (UPI)—Residents of this pastoral community are readying their defenses to fight a proposed anti-terrorist school that would teach government officials and businessmen how to combat kidnappers and assassins.

The counterterrorism training center is the brainchild of J. Peter Minogue, a 34-year-old entrepreneur who is trying to dispel images of night bombing raids and soldier-of-fortune types roaming through the Stafford County countryside.

But Mr. Minogue has hit civilian battle lines that threaten to halt his attempts to gain a special zoning permit that would allow the school on 100 acres along Potomac Creek.

He contends the school would serve executives in the public and private sector and typically involve one-day driving seminars and four-day seminars that would cover such items as "ambush scenarios [and] random attacks."

Mr. Minogue said his school would encompass a classroom building, a vehicle maintenance shop and facilities for outfitting armor-plated limousines. There would be a one-mile auto course for teaching defensive driving, particularly to chauffeurs and guards of the rich and powerful.

The most controversial element of the school is a firing range that would be

available for weapon demonstrations. Mr. Minogue said there would be no weapons heavier than a Uzi submachine gun, which fires .38-caliber pistol ammunition.

"We're not communists," said Mr. Minogue, who has engaged in the counterterrorism business for six years. "We're not soldier-of-fortune types.

"There won't be tanks. There won't be any night bombing runs. We won't be training Libyans. Oh, and we won't be using nerve gas."

Neighbor Don Macleay is not so sure.

"Like I heard somebody say, folks around here don't know the difference between a terrorist and a counterterrorist," said Mr. Macleay, a computer salesman. "And they really don't want to find out."

Mr. Macleay and others marshaled 150 Stafford residents to protest the zoning matter during a public hearing in December. The county Board of Supervisors postponed the decision until January, hoping the two sides could resolve their differences.

Ironically, Stafford officials earlier approved an \$800,000 industrial revenue bond issue for Mr. Minogue's business, JPM Inc., to help him to borrow funds to start the school.

Mr. Macleay does not believe the two sides will reconcile.